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ANTONIO VENEZIANO: MADONNA AND CHILD  
*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass.*



# ART IN AMERICA · AN ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE · VOLUME VIII NUMBER III · APRIL MCMXX

A PANEL BY ANTONIO VENEZIANO



HERE are not many devotional pieces of the fourteenth century at once so fresh, so temperate, so blissful as the Virgin and Child at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. It might appropriately have been an offering of thanks or praise, made by the gentle and eager spirit of the tiny donor. The picture has none of the unctuous over-urged gravity which had become, and was to remain, a convention before the secularization of painting in Italy. It is pitched high, and has none of the accustomed insinuation of weariness or agony. There is sweetness, piety, benevolence, but no passion pedantry, and the sentiment is so sheer and candid that it will address itself to moods of a certain order only.

An inner animation brightens the picture. It presents the moment when a sudden gladness has floated up into the child's face, who arrested by an inner movement, deeper and vaguer than His knowledge, looks up at His mother. The glance is grateful to her and she responds with a nod full of tenderness, and proffers Him the breast. She raises the left shoulder in the act, in an attitude which had been running in the blood of Sienese art like a family trait, ever since Simone Martini painted his Annunciation for the Sienese Duomo (now in the Uffizi). The shoulders are not the frail shoulders of Simone's Annunciate; they have the sturdier make of the Lorenzetti, and their movement and pattern remind one strongly of a Virgin in a miniature by the Maestro del Codice di S. Giorgio.<sup>1</sup>

Our painter avoids symmetry, throwing the group off the axis for an effect of *imprévu*. The action suspended for an instant in passage, the unaccomplished movement and the studied causal relation between the act and its end, the psychological absorption, confer upon the picture its air of unforced and unrehearsed reality.

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced in Venturi, *Storia del' Arte Italiana*, Vol. V, Fig. 786.

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Even the bird (possibly a cuckoo) is not merely an abstract symbol. He has his situation, and its logic forces him into the fluttering struggle for release. From below the Dominican sister gazes upward in absorbed adoration, and a collectedness which daily familiarity with divine things produces in the souls of simple people.

The profounder possibilities of the subject were not deliberately set aside, but they simply found no place in the conception of the painter. For the moment, he preferred a plausible intimacy of action, and the figures were required to be true to the earth in their responsibility to heaven.

Over it all flashes a strong and lively color, rising from the dark blue of the Virgin's mantle to a high yellow in the Child's tunic (which is reddish in the shadow<sup>2</sup>), and to the light green in the shawl over His legs. In spite of the modelling of individual parts which carries the shadow to a deep grey, in spite of the architectural pattern and rounded contours, there is a singular flatness over the face of the picture, which is inherent, as we shall see, in the aesthetic of this master. Christ's body is, accordingly, faced outward and extended along the surface rather than foreshortened, and His legs are crowded in depth, cramping the right arm of the Virgin. The forms are not granted their full share of relief or of free space in a scheme which is built up architecturally, but maintains the flatness of a façade.

The vertical outer contours of the Virgin's dress rise with the lateral boundaries of the panel towards the gracefully pointed top, embossed with cusps, the like of which is not to be found in the Florentine art preceding the painting of this panel, but which is common in Siena.<sup>3</sup>

The gladness, the exchange of glances, the divine familiarity, the design, are reminiscent of Bernardo Daddi and of the Lorenzetti, only our picture manifests a more deliberate and intimate research of infantile traits and psychology.

In the endeavor to trace the identity of the painter of our panel, accordingly, conjecture would take us to Siena, to those among her masters of the late fourteenth century who had not forgotten Simone Martini, still felt the influence of the Lorenzetti (Ambrogio rather than Pietro) and the strong incentive of Daddi or Giovanni da Milano. But Siena produced no one who is stylistically close enough to our

<sup>2</sup> A peculiarity of Antonio Veneziano. See also C. & C. Vol. II, p. 285 note 1 (London, Murray, 1903).

<sup>3</sup> The embossed adornment resembles that of Simone's Christ's Return from the Temple at Liverpool, and innumerable versions of it in the works of Simone's following.

picture to have painted it. Nor did Florence. My refusal of the panel to Spinello Aretino, under whose name it now hangs, should require no substantiation. Our Virgin is too remote in temper from the grave, ponderous and poetic Florentine, and nothing less than the failure of repeated conjecture can be responsible for the attribution.

To find interchange or combination of Sienese and Florentine characteristics one often has to go to Pisa, and it is in Pisa<sup>4</sup> in the Camposanto that we find our master in three damaged scenes from the life of San Ranieri. The only extant remains of the painting of Antonio Veneziano,<sup>5</sup> the narrative is at once romantic, fanciful, spirited, and handled with ingenuous realism. Admitting natural disparities between fresco and tempera, and a discrepancy in the dates of the two paintings, the manner, the types and the aesthetic content of our picture betray the same artistic personality.

It is in hardly alterable habits of operation and in those elements of expression which are beyond deliberation that we discover a master's style. He reveals himself in his optical idiosyncracies, in his turns, his accent, in his selection of shapes, in his types, in his original conceptions. And nothing so completely characterizes the artist as his attitude towards form. Antonio Veneziano has a Florentine understanding of its physical significance, and the modelling shadow within, or beyond the edge, in the Camposanto series, has the very respectable precedent of Giotto himself. This mode gives the figure in great flat masses as in the Death of San Ranieri, where it produces effects of architectural solidity and breadth. Thus the figure of San Ranieri or the smiling putto at the right in this same fresco, are modelled by a narrow margin of shadow not unlike our Virgin's head and the Christ's body; and the arms of both the figures of the fresco are handled in exactly the same way as in our picture. The tendency to cut the shadow sharply at the line of the jaw, in the same fresco, in the acolyte above San Ranieri and in the putto at the left of the group of children on the right, reappears in both our principal heads. At times Antonio is fond of puffing out the cheek as in the aforementioned acolyte, and repeats it in our Christ along with the inner contour. The cheek is treated differently again in the foremost figure in the galley in the Return of San Ranieri, and almost exactly as it occurs in our donor. The faint furrows below and above the heavy

<sup>4</sup> Antonio Veneziano's style was doubtless part Sienese, part Florentine before he worked in Pisa.

<sup>5</sup> There are, of course, the tabernacle frescoes at Nuovoli near the Porta a Prato, Florence, but they are ruined beyond legibility.



outline of the eye and the white circle around the iris, so characteristic of the frescoes, recurs in our faces. The hair drawn in strands, in the child above San Ranieri's head, in *The Death of San Ranieri*, and in the old angler at right of the *Miracles of San Ranieri*, is seen elaborated, tho virtually the same, in our Child.

The large ungainly hands that misleadingly recall certain ones by Spinello are of the same make as ours, and the left one of the acolyte in the *Death of San Ranieri* is drawn and modelled with less labored hesitation, but on the same pattern as the right hand of our Virgin.

The resemblances of type afford more obvious proof. The head of the young fisherman at the extreme right of the *Miracles of San Ranieri* is a reversal of the head of our Virgin, only the feminine mould is rounder. But the heads incline similarly and the eyes with their long tapering tails have the same glad mischief-lurking glance. The nose, the sensitive depression at the corners of the mouth, and the recesses below the lower lip, help to constitute a family resemblance. And the Child is conceived in a spirit and upon a model which served the master in the painting of the putto left of the group of children at the extreme right of the *Death of San Ranieri*. Only our Christ is younger and the irradiation of joy in His face cannot yet be called rapture. The startled head of the putto left of the same fresco is equally remote in mood from the two just mentioned, but the heavy and deliberate line, the posture and the assemblage of parts are as nearly identical with our Christ as is possible in two heads painted at diverse periods.

The superiority of fluency and relief in the Pisan head extends the gap between them, and the latter is unquestionably the later of the two, and would tend to establish my feeling that our little Virgin was painted some years before 1384, which is the latest possible date for the beginning of Antonio's Pisan activity. To confine the date within narrower limits one should have to go by the internal characteristics of our panel, the handling, the design, the shape and adornment of the top, and the relation of this totality to the small stock of Antonio's authenticated works, the frescoes at the Camposanto.

The external facts of Antonio's artistic activity would sustain all our surmises. Antonio was at his earliest recorded date (1369-1370) a companion in painting to Andrea Vanni at the Cathedral of Siena. This would easily account for his Sienese assimilations, as his later documented sojourn in Florence—added to Vasari's statements—accounts for the Florentine influence. If we now assume that he could

have lived and practiced in Florence only a short time before his enrollment in the guild of barber-surgeons in 1374, it might be a safe conjecture that this date constitutes a *terminus ante* for the painting of our panel; but the similarity of its determining stylistic factors to the San Ranieri group would put it a trifle later, ca. 1376.

*Richard Offner.*

## TWO SIENESE PAINTINGS IN AMERICAN MUSEUMS

THE Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University has recently acquired a small painting by the Sienese master Simone Martini. (Figure 1). The work represents the Crucifixion, and is painted on a panel, slightly pointed and measuring  $9\frac{3}{4}$  by  $5\frac{3}{8}$  inches. The shape of the panel is slightly irregular, the left side, up to the point where the edge turns to form the pinnacle, being some  $\frac{3}{10}$ ths of a centimetre higher than the right. Undoubtedly at one time the piece formed part of an elaborate polyptych.

The panel is in an unusually good state of preservation. The wood on which it is painted is now very thin, having been scraped down before a recent cradling. Across the panel, at a level with the torso of the figure, are two lines scratched in the gold leaf which represent some slight damage in the past. The pigment on the inscription I N R I at the top of the cross has blistered and scaled slightly. Except for these minor defects the work seems as fresh and vital as when it left Simone's hand. The gold background especially is perfect, and, with its reflected light from the delicately crackled surface, gives curiously the effect of a warm atmospheric background.

The drawing is swift and sure. The figure is the conventional emaciated one, but the modeling is unusually vigorous for a work of the Sienese school. The features especially are handled with boldness as well as delicacy. The flesh tone is the usual greenish one, the hair is painted in that clean transparent reddish brown that is so characteristic of Simone. The only brilliant spots of color are the spurts of carmine blood which appear at the hands, breast and feet of the Saviour. The cross and ground are brown.

Practically nothing is known of the history of the work. It was at one time in the collection of M. Léon Bonnat in Paris, and there it was seen by Mr. Berenson, who included it in his list of Simone's works in the *Central Italian Painters*. In discussing it the critic has nothing to guide him but internal evidence.

The date is something of a puzzle. For comparison one's mind leaps to the small Crucifixion in the Antwerp Museum (Figure 2), since the subject and scale of the two are so similar. Indeed, the attitudes of the chief figures are almost exactly the same, and the proportions of the crosses differ only slightly. The paintings do not, nevertheless, seem to be of approximately the same date. The Antwerp painting belongs to the Avignonese period at the very end of the master's career. At this time Simone was carried away by an extreme emotionalism. The Antwerp panel shows an exaggeration of emotion in the handling of the spectators, and even the Christ suggests an over-realism in the accent on the suffering, a contortion of the features in death, that makes the work a little less noble than some of the artist's earlier creations. This quality is not to be observed in the Fogg Museum piece. Tiny as it is, it has a breadth and dignity worthy of Simone's finest works. With all the grewsome details demanded by convention, the Saviour is painted with the restraint and nobility that marks Sienese art in the great periods of Duccio and Simone. It of course reflects the *Crucifixion* of Duccio, painted for the master's *Majestas* in 1311, but, nevertheless, must surely be a work of Simone's maturity. In round numbers, it might have been painted in 1335, which would place it soon after the Sant' Ansano *Annunciation*, now in the Uffizi Gallery.

It is interesting to compare the Fogg Museum panel with a little painting in the Boston Museum (Figure 3) representing the Crucifixion with the Madonna and Saint John. In the Museum the painting is attributed to Lippo Memmi. To the writer, however, this attribution has always seemed unsatisfactory. The painting shows a melodramatic emotionalism that is characteristic of Simone in the Avignon period and very unlike the calm of Lippo. A comparison of the features of the despairing Mary with those of the *Virgin Annunciate* by Simone in Antwerp will prove the close affinity of the Boston work to Simone's style in his latest period. For a long time the writer was tempted to consider the Boston painting an authentic work by Simone. A dryness of line, however, made the attribution untenable, and doubt was increased by the uncertain drawing of the mouth



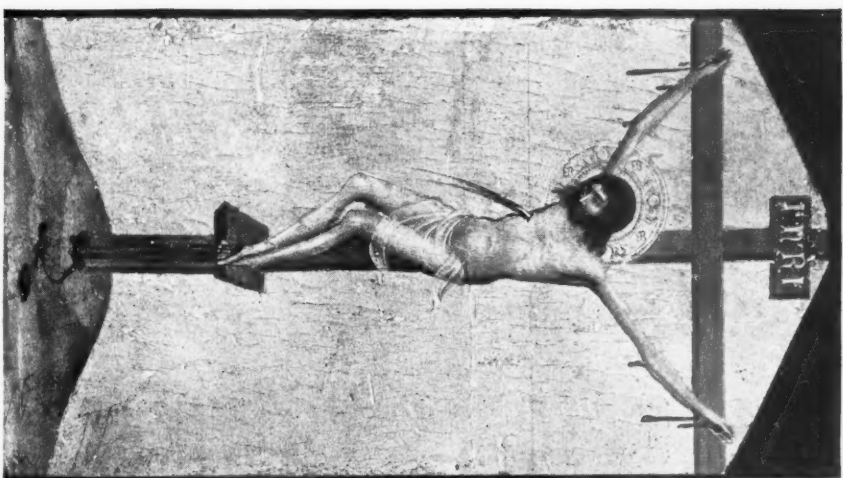


FIG. 1 SIMONE MARTINI: CRUCIFIXION  
*Fogg Museum of Art, Cambridge, Mass.*

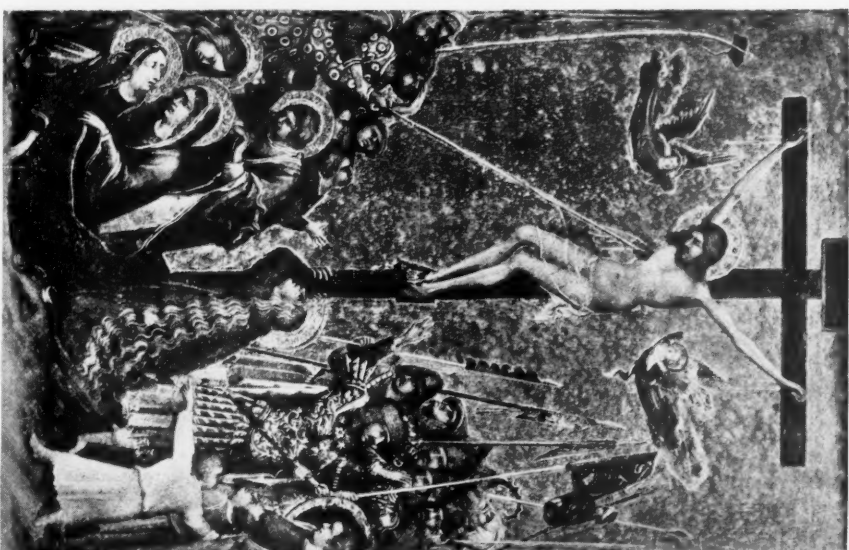


FIG. 2 SIMONE MARTINI: CRUCIFIXION  
*Antwerp*



FIG. 3 FOLLOWER OF SIMONE MARTINI: CRUCIFIXION  
*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*



of the Saint John and the long-nosed, rather shapeless head of the Christ. The painting appears to be by some able follower of Simone in his Avignon period. Research may yet reveal the artist's name.

*G. S. Egell*

#### ABOUT SOME OF HANS MEMLING'S PICTURES IN THE UNITED STATES

OF ALL the great Dutch painters of the fifteenth century Hans Memling is the only one who is well represented in the United States. For this there is a good reason, namely the strenuous efforts of American collectors to obtain the most important and most extraordinary masterpieces, which they are able to accomplish because their wealth acts like a magnet in drawing pictures from European collections across the ocean. The works of the Old Dutch school, which have been spared to us in Europe, are mostly to be found in churches and museums, where they are to a certain degree safe against transfer. And thus the greatest endeavors to organize a chronological and somewhat complete representation of the Flemish school on American soil has not been completely successful.

Under the circumstances only Memling's amiable personality could be transplanted to America, and this possibility has been realized in a surprisingly short time, for nearly all the pictures by this master, which were in private collections, have taken their way to America of late.

In an article in this periodical (June 1916) I have explained how the Metropolitan Museum of New York, owing to the magnificent Altman donation, is now able to arrange an exhibition of Memling's works as complete as any of the museums of Paris, London or Florence.

In connection with my former statements, I am giving here the whole range of Memling's pictures which, aside from the Altman collection, are extending the fame of the Master of Bruges in the United States.

Baron Albert Oppenheim of Cologne possessed three Old-Dutch portraits which, contained in one frame, came into his hands in 1896



from a British collection. These three masterpieces were taken out of the Baron's collection before it was put up for public sale in Berlin in 1917, and went to the United States. Two of the three pictures were added to the Altman collection in the Metropolitan Museum, namely the Dirk Bouts and a Memling. The third, also a Memling, to the collection of Mr. Michael Dreicer. The Memling of the Metropolitan Museum has been reproduced in this magazine (June 1916. Fig. 1).

This portrait of a young man (Fig. 1) was No. 70 in the remarkable loan-exhibition at Bruges in 1912, and has been kept in a perfect condition. In composition, drawing, and coloring it has more of the ripe and concentrated art of the Master than any other work in the United States. The man holds an arrow in his hand, probably indicating his membership in some St. Sebastian fraternity as in a portrait painted by Rogier Van der Wieden now in the Brussels Museum (catalog Wouters n. 90); the brown jacket, black high hat, and pearly substance of rosy flesh are put in cool harmony with the blue background. The modeling of the head and the fore-shortened hand reveal a firm and unpretentious completeness.

Memling (whose ancestors were not Dutch but Germans from Mittelsheim) became the portrait-painter of the Italian Merchants in Bruges. This favor was probably bestowed on him for his careful handiwork and true expression of balance. Some of the spirit of the Latin race seems however to have penetrated into his personality, as many of his portraits to be found in the collections of southern Europe have been attributed to Italian authors, more especially to Antonello da Messina.

Farther good examples of his skill as a portrait painter are: a bust-portrait of a man with a pink and a letter in his hands, from the Paris collection of Rudolph Kann which became the property of Pierpont Morgan (Fig. 3); and the "Young Man," in the collection of John N. Willys of Toledo.

The first picture has been exhibited by M. Ch. du Bourg of Perreux in the Paris loan-exhibition of the "Primitifs français" (1904 No. 59) not as a Memling, but attributed to "École de la Loire vers 1470." This extraordinary designation, however, was not long maintained. The second picture (Fig. 1) comes from the London collection of John Edward Taylor (sale July 1912 No. 38). The thick, long hair, covering the brow entirely in the fashion of southern Europe, shows this portrait to be that of an Italian gentleman. Here, as in



FIG. 1 MEMLING: PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN  
Collection of Mr. John N. Willis, Toledo



FIG. 2 MEMLING: THE ARCHER  
Collection of Mr. Michael Dreyer, New York

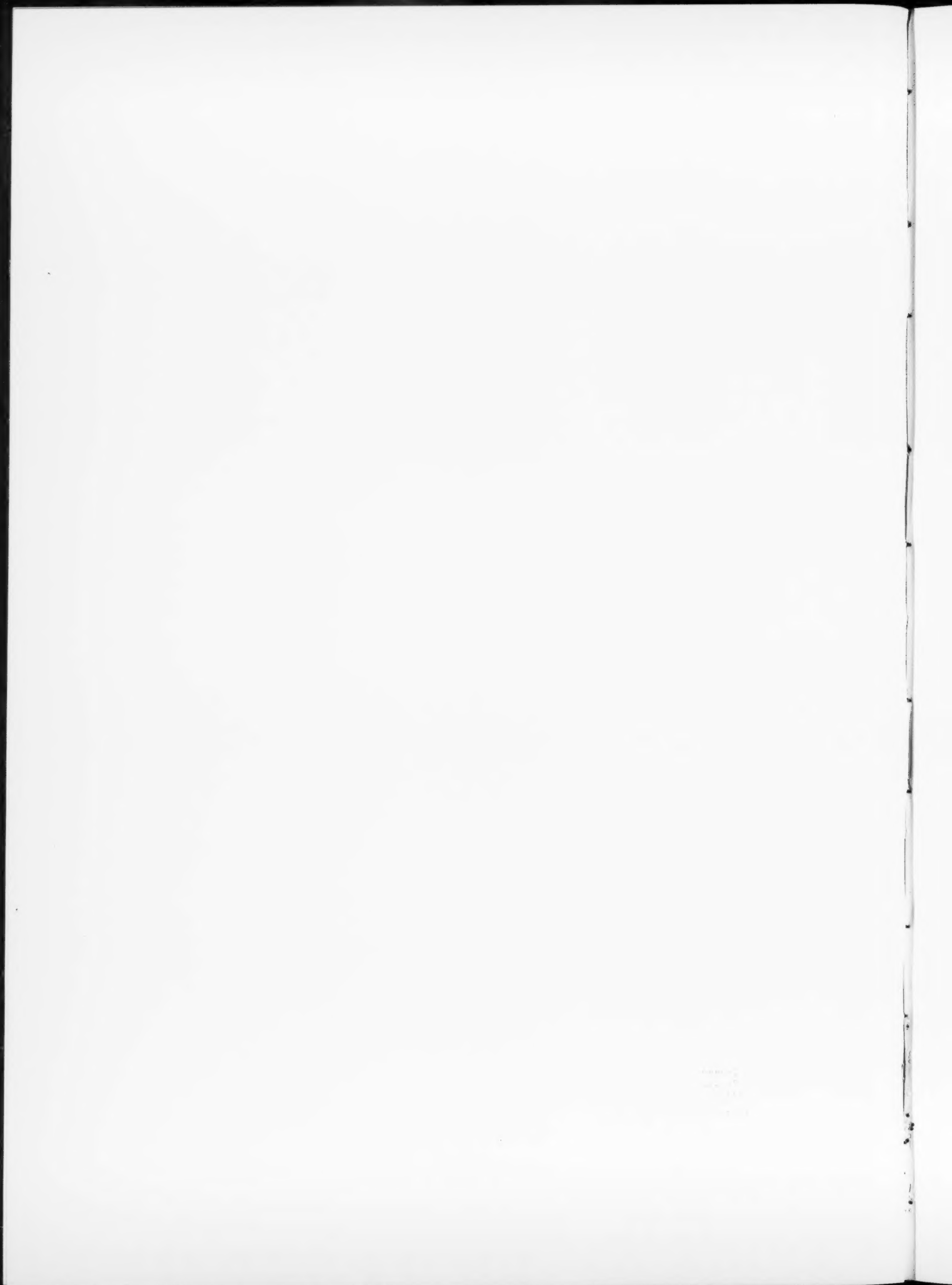






FIG. 3 MEMLING: MAN WITH A PINK  
Collection of Mr. J. P. Morgan, New York



FIG. 4 MEMLING: MADONNA  
Collection of Mr. Martin A. Ryerson, Chicago

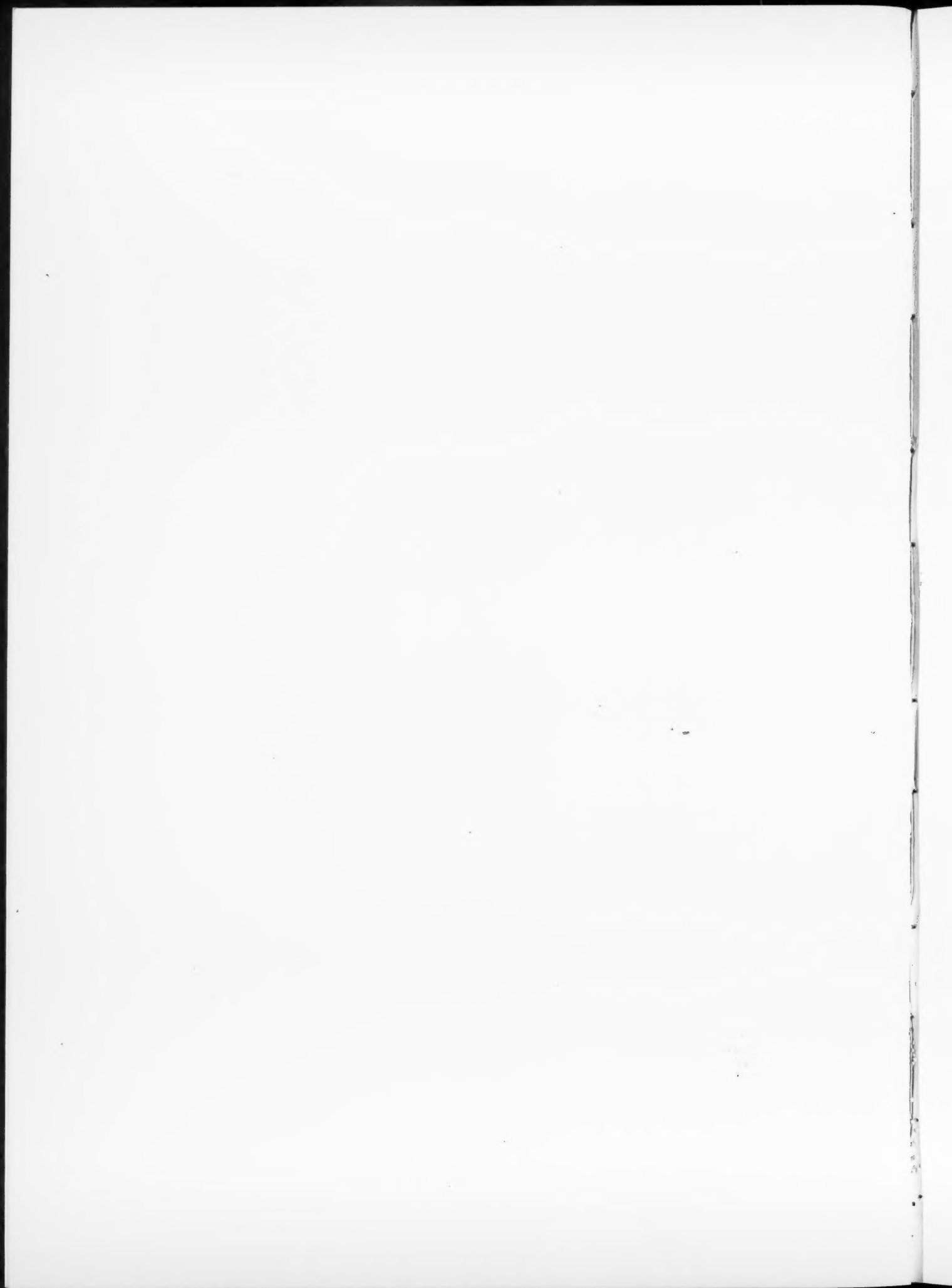




FIG. 5 MEMLING: CHRIST  
Collection of Mr. John G. Johnson, Philadelphia



FIG. 6 MEMLING: THE VIRGIN  
Collection of Mr. John G. Johnson, Philadelphia

10



many others of his paintings, Memling has widened and strengthened his composition by adding a sunny landscape.

Memling's peaceful mind, which expresses itself in each stroke of his brush, is the outcome of a creed, free from doubt, indecision, fear, or zealous asceticism. In many of his religious paintings he adorned the Divine with loveliness and grace, and with a special delight he glorified the Virgin mother and the holy women.

The late John J. Johnson (an art scientist among the American collectors) has by his grand donation enriched the city of Philadelphia with a gallery superior in quantity and historical instructiveness to any other in America. Here Memling is represented by two religious panels: (Figs. 5 and 6) Christ as the Man of Sorrows, showing the wounds on His hands and wearing the crown of thorns, with tears and blood-drops on His face; and this clerical conception of the Christ Memling has translated more in a sadly emotional manner, than as dramatically impressive. The head looks neither distorted nor frightful, and this beautifully preserved panel, originating in upper Italy, is full of divine resignation.

The other picture, a half-figure of the Madonna, is a fragment of a full-length figure receiving the Annunciation. Some of the too hard and too weak points of the drawing must be attributed to restoration. Both these pictures are mentioned in the large catalog of the Johnson collection, as Nos. 1176 and 324.

A Madonna and Child in half-figure (a favorite subject of the master) was purchased by Martin A. Ryerson of Chicago a few years ago from a Paris dealer (Fig. 4). Its composition reminds one of the famous Nieuwenhoven Madonna in the hospital of St. John in Bruges, dated 1487. With the same graceful turn of her hand Maria is holding an apple towards which the Christ-Child is reaching. There is the same round mirror on the wall, in which a window is reflected. In a different way however, from the stately frontal arrangement of the Bruges panel, the tendency of the principal lines in the Ryerson Madonna are more oblique; and the circle-round mirror is greatly foreshortened.

The loose and picturesque mobility of the treatment of this subject, combined with the plain dress of the Madonna, gives this picture in Chicago a more human and less sacred character than the figure in Bruges.

If the restricted variety of Memling's religious paintings impresses one as monotonous, conventional, or as lacking in observation,

one has to take into consideration the tendency of his art. The figurative object of the master was not to extend life's treasures, but to represent the divine. Memling did not paint one Madonna, and another one, and a third, but pictured *the* Madonna, as she took form in his imagination, depicting therefore always the same body and the same soul. This artist devoted to his pious profession figured types, or rather crystallized his observations into general types. It is much the same in our eyes, as the not less conventional art of Fra Angelico. Like the monk of Florence, Memling always repeats himself, because to him there was nothing more worthy of expression between Heaven and Earth; and this he says with expressive and convincing words.

Wm. J. Friedländer

#### A TOWER OF IVORY

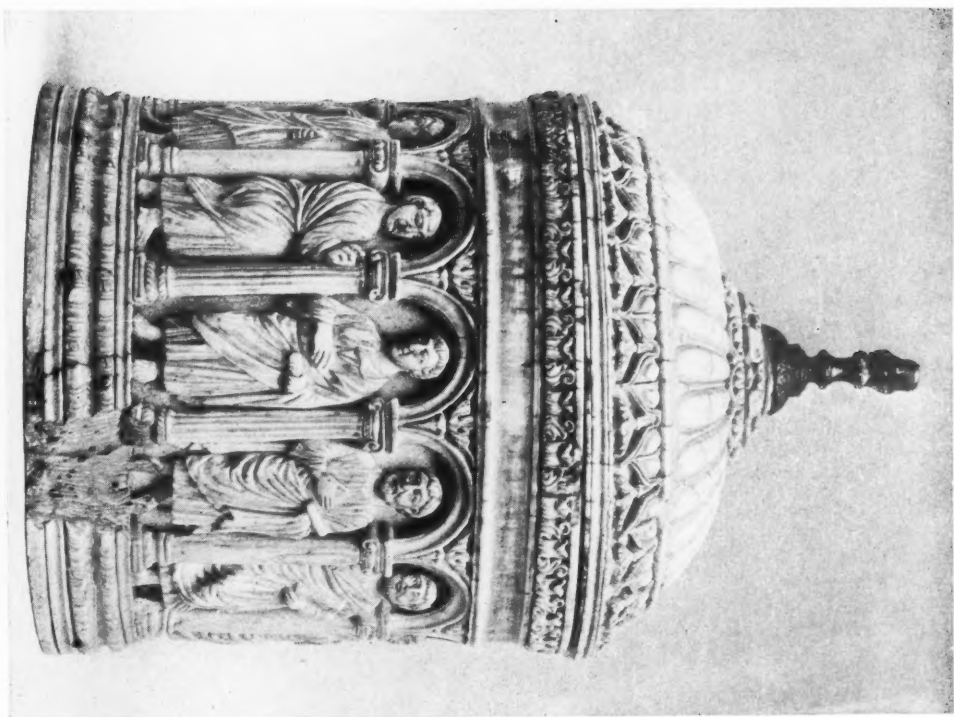
NONE of the Early Christian ivories in the Morgan Collection, presented to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1917, surpasses in interest the ivory box<sup>1</sup> reproduced herewith. Existing ivories of the fifth century A.D. are so few in number that this ciborium, unusual in form, size, and decoration, has an exceptional importance for the student of primitive Christian art.

The box measures  $6\frac{3}{16}$  inches in height, exclusive of the gilt bronze finial on the cover. This finial, decorated with a band of relief ornament of an Oriental character, is incomplete; its present height is  $1\frac{5}{16}$  inches. The height of the box without the cover is  $4\frac{3}{8}$  inches; the diameter,  $4\frac{9}{16}$  inches. Two slight projections on the rim of the cover fit into notches cut in the concave inner rim of the box. By turning the cover, when it is fitted to the box, the two parts can thus be locked together, and the ciborium suspended, as described later on.

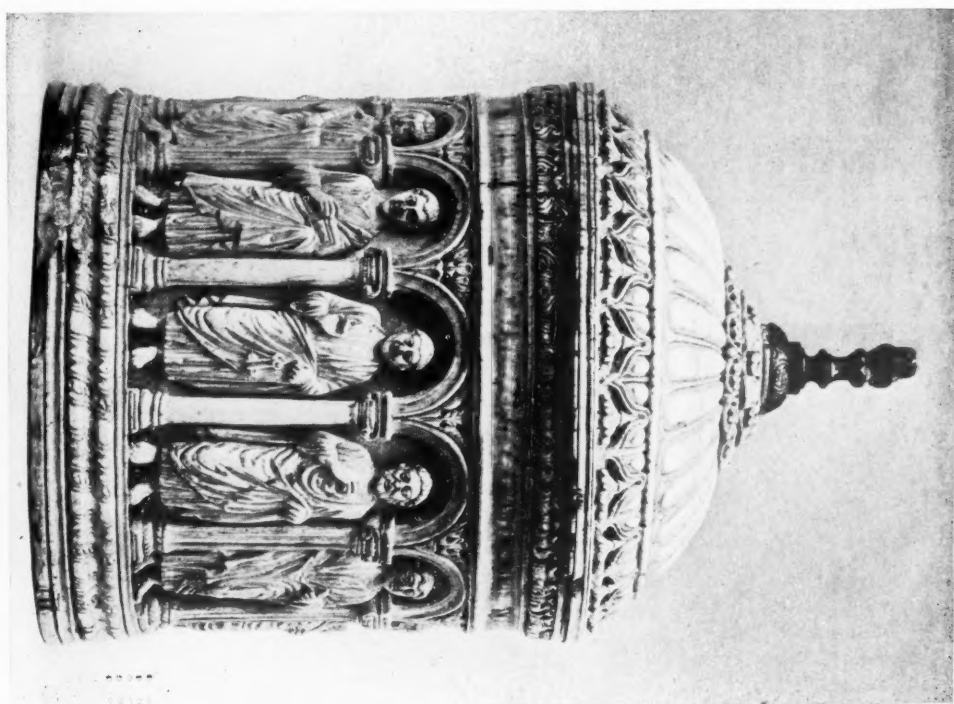
The principal decoration of the box consists of figures of the Twelve Apostles<sup>2</sup> standing in the intercolumniations of an arcade. The round-headed arches are supported by columns with Ionic cap-

<sup>1</sup> Accession No. 17. 190. 240. A.B. The earlier history of the piece is unknown to the present writer.

<sup>2</sup> St. Mathias replaces the traitor Judas.



IVORY CIBORIUM WITH THE TWELVE APOSTLES  
 PROBABLY SYRIAN; FIFTH CENTURY  
*The Pierpont Morgan Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*



*Showing, at the center, St. Peter with the keys*





itals (rare in this period), and with plain or fluted shafts alternating in pairs. The Apostles wear the tunic and chlamys. Seven carry scrolls; two, books; and one—a beardless St. Peter, the symbolic keys. The poses are animated, with considerable variety in the gestures. The bodies are seen from the front, with two exceptions where the body is turned in a three-quarter position showing either the back or side of the figure. The head of St. Peter, who alone raises his hand in blessing, faces front. The heads of the two Apostles on either side are turned toward him. Of the seven remaining figures, one head is seen in profile, one from the front, and the others in three-quarter views. A balanced arrangement occurs only in the group of St. Peter and the two Apostles on either side of him. Obviously the intention of this is to give greater prominence to the Prince of the Apostles.

The foliated ornament on the box is particularly fine in design and execution. Below the colonnade is a double torus moulding carved with alternating oblique bands and serrated leaf (?) motives. The spandrels are decorated with spreading acanthus leaves. The band ornamenting the upper member of the entablature is also composed of acanthus leaves, single leaves alternating with groups of three. The gadrooned cover, domical in form, is crowned by the metal finial previously mentioned, and by two bands of leaf motives suggesting acanthus and palmette forms. A wide band of leaf-and-dart alternating with an inverted spray of acanthus decorates the lower part of the cover.

Technical skill of the highest order characterizes the ornamental carving. The figures are less successful; the style is effective but mannered, and, despite a certain originality, is still manifestly dependent on traditional forms. Both ornament and figures show a fondness for strong contrasts of light and shade. The figures are under cut; the columns and parts of the arches are free-standing. There is a sharp distinction between the plane of the modelling and the plane of the background. One is in full light; the other, lost in shadow from which individual forms emerge in violent relief. The figures, each independent of the other, stand in "cubic isolation," to use Riegl's phrase. This coloristic method, a technique of Oriental origin, is ill-adapted to the representation of dramatic scenes. Its faults are less obvious, however, in compositions of ceremonial character such as that on the Morgan box, where each figure, separately framed by columns and arch, offers an equal attraction to the spectator's regard.

There can be little doubt, since a Christian subject is carved on the box, that it served to contain the Eucharistic reserve. It belongs, therefore, to a class of objects which may be described by the general term of ciboria. From early documents we learn that the ciborium was called not only by this name but also described as capsula, pyxis, cuppa, columba and turris. Whether or not the designation "turris" (tower) can be applied to all cylindrical ciboria, of which a small group of Early Christian examples has survived to us, it would seem to be properly applicable to the Morgan ivory, which, in form and decoration, has decidedly an architectural character. The Morgan ciborium is also larger than the usual pyxis of the period. Three characteristic examples of these smaller cylindrical boxes may be seen in the Morgan Collection; they are Syrian or Egyptian work of the sixth century. For the references to *turres* in early documents, the reader should consult the monumental work of de Fleury, under the heading "Ciboires."<sup>3</sup>

It is probable that the cover of the turris was often, if not invariably, surmounted by a dove, to which a chain was attached for the suspension of the ciborium. It has already been noted that the cover of the Morgan piece can be locked to the lower part and is crowned by a metal finial, now partly destroyed, which may have originally been completed by the addition of such a dove.

We must now consider the date and the place of origin of our "Tower of Ivory." The decorative scheme of an arcade with Apostles standing in the intercolumniations suggests at once the sculpture on many Early Christian sarcophagi, but as compositions of this sort occur on sarcophagi found in regions so widely separated as Asia Minor and Gaul, the fact alone is of little value in determining provenance. It is useful, however, to compare the figures on the Morgan box with those on the sarcophagi, especially with examples of fourth-century work. In the sculpture of this period, the influence of Hellenistic art is still so strongly marked, although expressed in debased forms, that the relaxation of the tradition which we note in the carving of the Morgan ivory makes it unwise to date the ciborium earlier than the fifth century.

On the other hand, the date can hardly be later than the fifth century. This opinion is substantiated by a comparison of the Morgan ivory with such typical monuments of sixth century sculpture as the two front columns of the ciborium of San Marco at Venice.

<sup>3</sup> La Messe, 1887, Vol. V, p. 60 ff.

These important sculptures are East Christian, probably Syrian, and date from the first half of the century.<sup>4</sup> As the columns are decorated with zones of New Testament subjects carved in high relief, with the figures disposed in arcades, there is enough similarity in general composition with the Morgan ciborium to make particularly clear the differences in style. The lack of elegance, the vivacity of the figures, the novelties in pose and composition which characterize the sculptures on the San Marco columns, represent a wide departure from classical tradition and indicate for the more conventional carving of the Morgan ciborium an earlier date than the sixth century. On the evidence of style we would seem to be justified in assigning the Morgan ivory to the fifth century.

Some of the figures on the ivory ciborium carry books instead of scrolls. In the fourth century, or even earlier, the Hellenistic scroll began to be replaced in popular favor by the codex or paged book.<sup>5</sup> The scroll continued to be used, however, for a considerable period, and the presence of both forms of manuscript on the ciborium is precisely what might be expected in the fifth century.

We have already observed that St. Peter carries the symbolic keys, which became his familiar attribute in art from the end of the sixth century on. We find, however, St. Peter carrying the keys in monuments as early as the fifth century,<sup>6</sup> although the scroll of the law or the cross are more common symbols.

The coloristic carving of the Morgan ciborium is indicative of an East Christian origin. This Oriental technique, in combination with late classical elements in form and decoration, is particularly characteristic of the Early Christian sculpture of Asia Minor and Syria. It is also true, of course, that both Alexandrian and Coptic art were influenced by the Orient; especially Coptic art, which shows close relations with the orientalized art of Syria and Palestine. At the same time, on the evidence of style, I think we may disregard Egypt as a probable provenance for the ciborium.

As to the sculpture of Asia Minor, our chief evidence is afforded by the sarcophagi of the Sidamara type, on which, it is interesting

<sup>4</sup> See Venturi: *Storia dell' Arte*, Vol. I, p. 444 ff. fig. 219 ff. where convincing argument is advanced for the date of these sculptures. It is impossible, however, to accept Venturi's opinion that the columns were carved at Pola. Stylistic and iconographic evidence points unmistakably to an origin in Asia Minor or Syria. Gabelantz suggests Syria-Palestine as a probable locality (see Strzygowski, *Byz. Zeitschr.*, XII, 1903, p. 433).

<sup>5</sup> O. M. Dalton: *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, 1911, p. 441.

<sup>6</sup> J. Ficker: *Die Darstellung der Apostel in der altchristlicher Kunst*, 1887, pp. 99, 155.

to note, figures directly inspired by Hellenistic art are disposed in niches separated by columns, suggesting the decorative scheme of the ciborium. In other architectural details, however, and in the character of the deeply drilled, coloristic ornament the sarcophagi are dissimilar to our ciborium. Although the date of these monuments is uncertain, they may be assigned in all probability to the third and fourth centuries, that is to say, to an earlier period than the ciborium. Is the ivory carving a later development of the Orientalized Hellenistic school which produced the sarcophagi? This seems hardly likely in view of the great difference in style between the ornament on the ciborium and that on the sarcophagi, although the insufficient material for comparison makes one hesitate to venture any definite assertion.

With the ornamental sculpture of Syria, on the other hand, the Morgan ivory has close analogies. Particularly characteristic of Syrian decorative carving is the originality with which traditional Hellenistic design motives are "restudied" and adapted to the new taste for rich, colorful effects, resulting from contact with the Oriental world, and further exemplified by the borrowing of typical Oriental motives. The latter do not appear on the ciborium, but the ingenious variations of classical motives which we do find reveal the inventive ability typical of Syrian art. Not less so is the dryness of the technique, the coloristic method, and the profusion of the ornament which verges on over-decoration. If the Ravenna sarcophagi and the ciborium columns at Venice are Syrian work, as seems probable, then a comparison with the figure carving on the Morgan ivory confirms the impression made by the ornament that the ciborium is Syrian in origin.

The architectural form of the "Tower" supports the theory of an East Christian origin. But as the type of circular, domed building was common both to Asia Minor and to Syria, this evidence is helpful only in a general way. One may surmise, however, that the form of the ciborium may have been intended to recall the rotunda with cupola which Constantine erected over the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.<sup>7</sup> The imitation of this building would naturally have a particular significance for a ciborium.

<sup>7</sup> It may be of interest to note that after the Sack of Jerusalem in 614, the shrine at the Holy Sepulchre, known as the Anastasis, was rebuilt by the Abbot Modestus (building completed in 626), who repeated the circular form of the edifice, but substituted a conical roof for the cupola. Constantine's shrine at the Holy Sepulchre is thought to be represented in the fourth century mosaic in Santa Pudenziana at Rome.



On the whole, I am inclined to believe that the "Tower of Ivory" in the Morgan Collection dates from the fifth century and was made probably in Syria; perhaps, if one may hazard a guess, at Antioch, where, it will be recalled, St. Peter, who is given especial prominence in the decoration of the ciborium, resided for a considerable period and founded the Church of Antioch.

John B. B. B.

#### DR. HENRY M. SANDERS' GIFT OF ETCHINGS TO VASSAR COLLEGE

RECENTLY through the generosity of the Reverend Dr. Henry M. Sanders, a Trustee, Vassar College has come into possession of a small but choice group of etchings representative of the work of Rembrandt, Seymour Haden, and Claude Lorrain. The Rembrandts are Dr. Sylvius (1645), Jan Six, The Landscape with the Ruined Tower, The Three Trees, and Christ Healing the Sick. The Hadens are Challow Farm, Sunset in Ireland, a Lancashire River, Early Morning—Richmond, and Shere Mill Pond. The Claude is the well-known Herdsman.

Among the Rembrandts it is difficult to choose, but one may venture to designate the Burgomaster Six as certainly the most suggestive of the artist's supreme color sense. Of this particular print the late Frederick Keppel said that it "is undoubtedly the finest impression in the world of this masterpiece", and, even if one were tempted to take exceptions to Mr. Keppel's enthusiasm—which the present writer is not—it is inconceivable that anyone should not be entranced by the sheer beauty of the proof. In it perhaps more than in any other of Rembrandt's etchings, the artist displayed pictorial tonal values. He has worked with infinite patience until the background has become a mystery of velvety, yet living shadows. Contrasted with the more spontaneous of Rembrandt's etched work this portrait shows the artist approaching his work in the mood of a painter—translating into his blacks and whites the color values of nature. The amount of care bestowed is amazing, for, contrary to the usual habit of etching, nothing is merely noted or suggested and

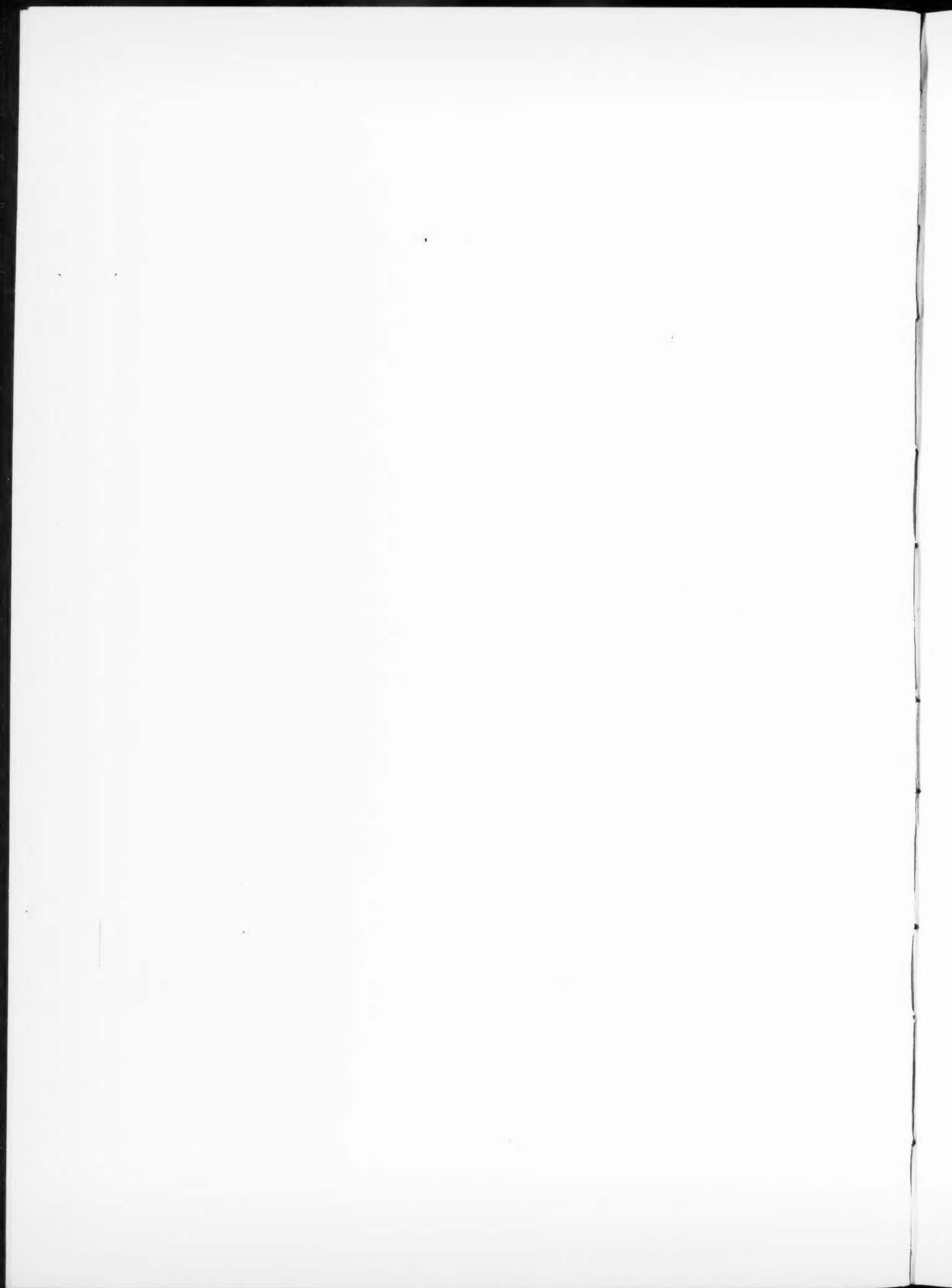
then passed over. Although the needle has moved almost like a breath over the face the modelling is thoroughly carried out. Its lighting is afforded by the reflection from the book held in the wonderfully expressive hands of Six. So subtle is the execution that one might readily imagine Rembrandt here was trying to see how far he could push the refinement of the art of etching.

If the Jan Cornelis Sylvius falls far below the Six in general effect, on the other hand the sympathetic characterization of the venerable, spiritual preacher is remarkable. The print at Vassar is from the plate of 1646, not the earlier, overshadowed portrait of the same subject done in 1634. One might easily wish that the artist had not loaded the plate with the excessive lettering and the over-conspicuous shading of the background, but the extreme delicacy of the treatment of the head reminds one of the delicate handling of the modelling in the head of Six which was produced a year later. Indeed what is suggested here in the way of refinement is perfected in the Burgomaster Six. The copy given to Vassar by Dr. Sanders is an exceptionally fine one and, in view of Blanc's statement that fine examples are rare, becomes of peculiar interest in this collection.

The other remaining figure piece is the famous Hundred Guilders Print. This supreme example of the technique of etching is Rembrandt's ultimate achievement in the matter of size of plate, loving finish, and impressiveness. The example under discussion is a third, or what may be called the first finished state and, executed a few years after the Jan Six, it shows an increased interest in the tonal quality of etching. By the use of the splendid, deep shadow which dominates practically the right half of the picture and most effectively throws into relief the spiritualized form of Christ, the brilliant, sketchy portion of the plate at the left is given a most intense luminosity. The effect, however, is not one of mere opposition of light and dark, for in the figures at the right is a most subtle diffusion of light which envelops the exquisitely drawn faces of the sick with a semi-obscurity that adds infinitely to the atmospheric appearance of the scene. The heads are most skilfully characterized, the delineation of the mental states running all the way from scepticism in the faces at the extreme left and pensive meditation in that of the handsome young man at Christ's left to pathos in the features of the sick. The power of characterization reaches its height in the wearied spirituality of Christ's head. The modelling is done at times with a delicacy comparable to that of the Six and the Sylvius and at others with a crisp



REMBRANDT: PORTRAIT OF JAN SIX, BURGOMASTER OF AMSTERDAM  
*Drawn and etched in 1647*





spontaneity possible almost only in dry point. The skilful profiling of the group so as to bring the figure of Christ into prominence and the happy note of the black hat of the sturdy figure in the left foreground, employed to throw the darker figures still further into the background are evidences of Rembrandt's close attention to all matters which make for pictorial effect. While the print might not appeal to some collectors because it is not one of the earliest states, its inexpressible loveliness bears testimony to the false standard which places a value upon the unusual rather than the beautiful. As Mr. Weitenkampf justly says, "It is also well to remember that that which is most sought after in life is not inevitably the best . . . . A fad is not necessarily good taste."

The two landscapes from among the Rembrandt etchings are the Landscape with the Ruined Tower and the Three Trees. The former, which shows the spire removed from the tower to gain concentration in composition, is executed in the more usual manner of etching in which the bitten line is made to suggest rather than to imitate nature. The proof, from the Artaria Collection, is a very beautiful example of this rare print. Almost with the minimum means Rembrandt has depicted the peculiar glow of light which precedes the approaching storm seen in the distance. One could hardly wish for a more clean-cut exhibition of the artist's forthrightness of execution.

In contrast to this stands the splendid Three Trees, in which the execution is carried in certain parts as far as it was in the Six portrait. One can easily understand after studying the proof from the Sanders gift how the Three Trees would be one of the most popular of Rembrandt's etchings, for the various parts are most lovingly carried out. One feels the moisture of the earth after a rainstorm, and finds the landscape far and near teeming with life—so rich indeed in life that it needs close scrutiny to see all that it contains. Even in the rolling clouds the artist seems to have suggested two fantastic genii of the storm rising athwart the heavens from the horizon at the left. The contrast of the dark foreground with the lighted distance, the brilliant, penetrating light from the left is most impressive, and the skill with which the distant objects, although faintly suggested, are clearly indicated is an eloquent comment on the artist's ability.

Of the Hadens particularly attractive are these—the Sunset in Ireland, Shere Mill Pond, a Lancashire River, and Early Morning—Richmond. In the Richmond one can trace the distinct influence of

Rembrandt's style as it appears in the *Three Trees*. Both etchings by Haden show the same interest in rich effects. Particularly attractive in that respect is the atmospheric quality of the Irish etching in which one can feel the moisture that emanates from the earth at twilight. Splendid as it is in the treatment of foliage one ventures to criticize the prominence given to the black branch overhanging the stream in the foreground.

Haden's remarkable knowledge of tree forms and foliage is displayed not only in the last proof but as well in *Early Morning-Richmond*. It is possible that the artist's peculiar insight into the character of trees has led him to overaccentuate the woods at the right and to neglect definition in the distance, but granting that, the composition, which recalls that of the *Three Trees*, is most interesting and the lighting very forceful. *Shere Mill Pond* once more shows distinguished skill in the drawing of trees and a most pleasant arrangement of the scene. One can understand how one critic at least has considered it the finest landscape ever etched except one by Claude. The proof is a first state.

The artist's own enthusiasm over *A Lancashire River*, is justified by its award of the Medal of Honor at Paris. One appreciates the beautiful massing of the trees, the solid modelling of the distant cliffs, and the fine characterization of the extreme distance at the left in which he far surpasses his treatment of the *Richmond* etching. The gradation from foreground to background is most skilfully manipulated. One might wish that the cows in the middle distance had not been etched so dark. This, however, is but a detail and the proof, which bears Haden's own writing to the effect that it is the second from the plate, taken together with *Shere Mill Pond*, justifies the artist's position among the leading etchers of landscape past or present.

*Challow Farm*, with its spontaneity and simplicity stands to the others as Rembrandt's *Landscape with the Ruined Tower* does to the *Three Trees*.

Claude is represented in this little collection by the *Herdsmen*, which is from the Esdaile Collection. Hamerton has said of this work that "for technical quality of a certain delicate kind this is the finest etching in the world." Although conceived in what may be called the grand style so far as material is concerned the surface is worked with an indescribable tenderness which leads from the fugitive distance to the deeper note of the luxuriant foliage in the left foreground.

The proofs bear testimony in every instance to the loveliness of the finished product and convict the searcher for proofs which depend for their price upon rarity, or peculiarity, of a distortion of values. When one reaches the state of desiring an etching or other work of art because of its rarity or individual peculiarity he degrades himself to the level of a stamp collector whose craving is for what the other fellow hasn't.

*Oliver S. Tonks*

UNPUBLISHED PAINTINGS  
BY ALBERT PINKHAM RYDER

ALBERT RYDER, though a recluse, was personally a very lovable character and those few who ever really got to know him well are unanimous in their praise of his many fine qualities. Not the least of these was his great love for children, of which he has left some convincing evidence in letters to Mr. Harold W. Bromhead, whose daughter Elsie he met as a 'tittle girl in 1901. He wrote in one place "My real pleasure was that I could have given pleasure to your dear little angel of a girl" and at the end of another letter "Love to little Elsie sweetheart, and may she be pleased with her new playmate"—presumably himself!

Marsden Hartley wrote just after the artist's death "I have spent some of the rarer and lovelier moments of my experience with this gentlest and sweetest of other-world citizens; I have felt with ever-living delight the excessive loveliness of his glance and of his smile and heard that music of some far-away world which was his laughter." Mr. Bromhead says he was "the most beautiful and Christ-like character I have ever known."

Much has been written about Ryder's customary delay in completing his pictures and it so happens that I can add a new and entirely valid reason for much of it. His sister-in-law, Mrs. E. N. Ryder, tells me that his eyesight was seriously affected in early youth by the unfortunate results of vaccination, the vaccine having poisoned him. How serious this trouble with his eyes really was may be gathered from the following extract from a letter which he wrote in 1901; "My eyes started on a rampage directly after I had written you, and

with me it is a particularly dangerous matter; as if I do not indulge them there is a great possibility of little ulcers coming on the eye itself." I do not mean to say that he did not habitually hesitate over the completion of most of his important pictures nor that he was not constantly thinking of possible changes for the improvement of paintings long after they left his studio. He sometimes, indeed, lost a picture entirely in working over it and in one of his letters says "I lost both the Lorelei and the Passing Song but have them under way again," and in another letter "I sometimes think, the smallest thing I do, it is as if my life depended on it—and then the great shadow, always, of the impossible and unattainable." The last phrase is a suggestive indication of the ambition that was the chief occasion, other than his weak eyesight, for the delay that was his custom. It was the result of his efforts to incorporate in his painting a new and higher ideal which his powerful imagination perceived but which, nevertheless, he labored in vain generally to realize in his pictures. Not always in vain, however, for one or two of them at least are to be numbered among the great masterpieces of pictorial art.

Of his friends among the artists the best judges of Ryder's work and of the authenticity of pictures said to be from his hand are, I believe, Messrs. Alexander Shilling, Albert L. Groll and Elliott Daingerfield. Mr. Charles Melville Dewey, who was made the executor of his estate, has condemned several paintings from his hand as forgeries, two or three of which have a perfectly established history. I have personally examined perhaps more of his works than anyone else and have photographs of one hundred and fourteen, about two thirds of his entire product, including practically all of the important pictures. It would be absurd to presume, I think, that anyone undertook to execute forgeries of his work previous to 1912, as they had still at that time only a small market value, and there would have been no sufficient profit in it to make it worth while. Of recent forgeries I have seen not more than six or seven and they were too poor to deceive anyone at all familiar with his work. The distinguishing marks of his hand are so unique in the painting of his time in this country that it is not really difficult to determine whether a picture is from his brush. The curious cloud formations and the strange misshapen boat of his marines, the long thin legs and the high-backed saddle of the Arab horse in his Eastern subjects, the peculiar drawing of the raised forefoot of a moving horse, the extreme simplicity of his drawing in landscape and the two schemes of color,





ALBERT P. RYDER: HOMEWARD BOUND (1893-4)

*Canvas, 9 inches high, 18 inches wide. Signed lower right, A. Ryder*

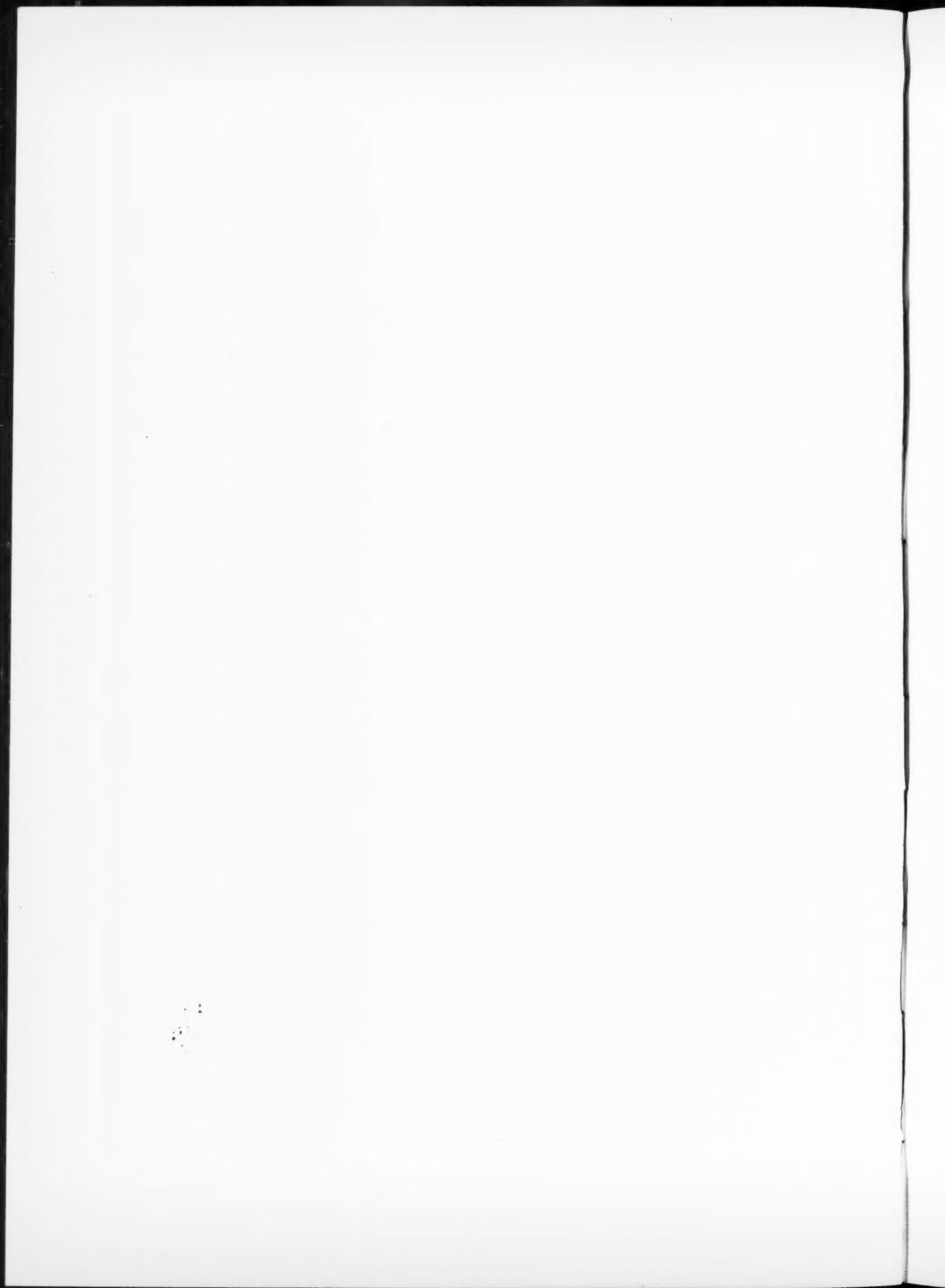
*Painted for Capt. John Robinson, formerly of the Atlantic Transport Line, now retired*



ALBERT P. RYDER: THE WRECK (1892)

*Canvas, 12 inches high, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches wide*





brown and blue-green, in which he worked, constitute a sufficient basis for the beginning of a scientific study of his style. The absence of a signature is generally a favorable omen.

Ryder had a peculiar liking for the dusk, the darkness and the shadows. Mystery and moonlight made of the night a marvel of magic for him. He had a habit of going off alone on long walks on moonlit nights and told one of his friends that he "soaked in the moonlight" on those occasions which he afterward put into his pictures. Mrs. E. N. Ryder says that when he used to visit her in the summers on Cape Cod he would often get up in the middle of the night and go off to the shore to sketch the moonlight effects on the water.

Of the many canvases that testify to his power as a painter of this type of picture the Moonlit Cove has long been highly esteemed. A small canvas, it seems large because the composition is confined to a few simple forms. Their disposition is such as to throw a shadow over the boat upon the beach under the cliff and the moonlight envelops the whole scene in mystery. With slight alteration he used much the same design in a number of other works. Sometimes the composition is reversed but invariably the theme is the same. It is a realization in color of the mystery and the poetry of the night. In the terms of music each and every one of these variations upon the theme is a singularly beautiful and satisfying poem in itself. One of them, recently discovered, is in some ways more perfect than the picture already mentioned in its exploitation of the same artistic purpose. In this painting, *The Wreck*, the bare mast and bowsprit of the stranded schooner break the silhouette of the cliff against the sky and the cavernous mouth of the cave at the right relieves again the slightly monotonous effect of that mass as it appears in the former work. Though but details these deviations add something of variety to the composition and seemingly intensify the idea of mystery which is the dominant interest in all of these paintings. Furthermore the color is more skilfully handled so as to discover such suggestive forms as the shadow of the boat, the mouth of the cave and the inequalities of the rough mass of the projecting cliff.

Another picture of great personal interest is called *Homeward Bound*. It is the picture painted by the artist for his friend Capt. John Robinson of the Atlantic Transport Line, now retired, upon whose ship, the *Menominee*, Ryder crossed the Atlantic in the early 'nineties' and with whom he dined and visited regularly as long as Capt. Robinson remained in the service, whenever he was at liberty

on this side. A work of about 1893 or '94, in mood and technic it varies considerably from other works from his hand. It is more nearly realistic than his marines generally are and less dependent upon the imaginative vigor of a peculiarly personal conception. It retains something of the actual loveliness of the sea and more than is usual in his work of the intimate human interest that is focused in a solitary boat. It was intended to represent the return to port of a fishing craft laden with the 'catch,' and it is not unsuccessful in the prose of that intention, however more engaging it is in the poetry of its blending of the colors of the sea and the sky with the rhythm of the clouds, the waves and the movement of the sailing yawl. It is very colorful in a subdued sense and has none of the forbidding darkness of most of the moonlit sea pictures. Personally I find it the most enchanting of all his marines and one of the most perfect of all his works.

The Eastern Scene which I reproduce is a large canvas and one of the most dignified of the tonal pictures Ryder painted in what I may term the key of a single color. In it, if anywhere, one will find ample proof of his being a great colorist in a limited sense. In contradistinction to his customary habit the composition is static, but in its elaboration there is to a supreme degree all of the inevitable poetry of Ryder's great imagination, evident in a wondrous rhythm of values. The magic of his touch is apparent even in its farthest depths and over all there is a glamour of truly Oriental splendor. The Arab horse with the high-backed saddle and the conical tent are practically identical with similar details of Mr. Montross's Oriental Encampment, and together with the characteristic grouping of the trees at the left and the cloud forms in the evening sky, are conclusive evidence of its being an autograph work.

In the Autumn exhibition of the National Academy of Design in 1887 Ryder showed a picture of Ophelia of which I could find no trace when I began the writing of my forthcoming monograph for the American Artists Series of books. In the spring of last year, happening to mention the matter to a friend, she was reminded of such a picture with which she had been familiar some years ago and offered to try to get it for me to see. Only recently I had the pleasure of acquiring it, through her, from the former owner. It is a symphony in golden browns and yellows, relieved by notes of rose and white and green, as they occur in the wreath of flowers about Ophelia's head and the foliage and blossoms lying in her lap. It is such a touching, such

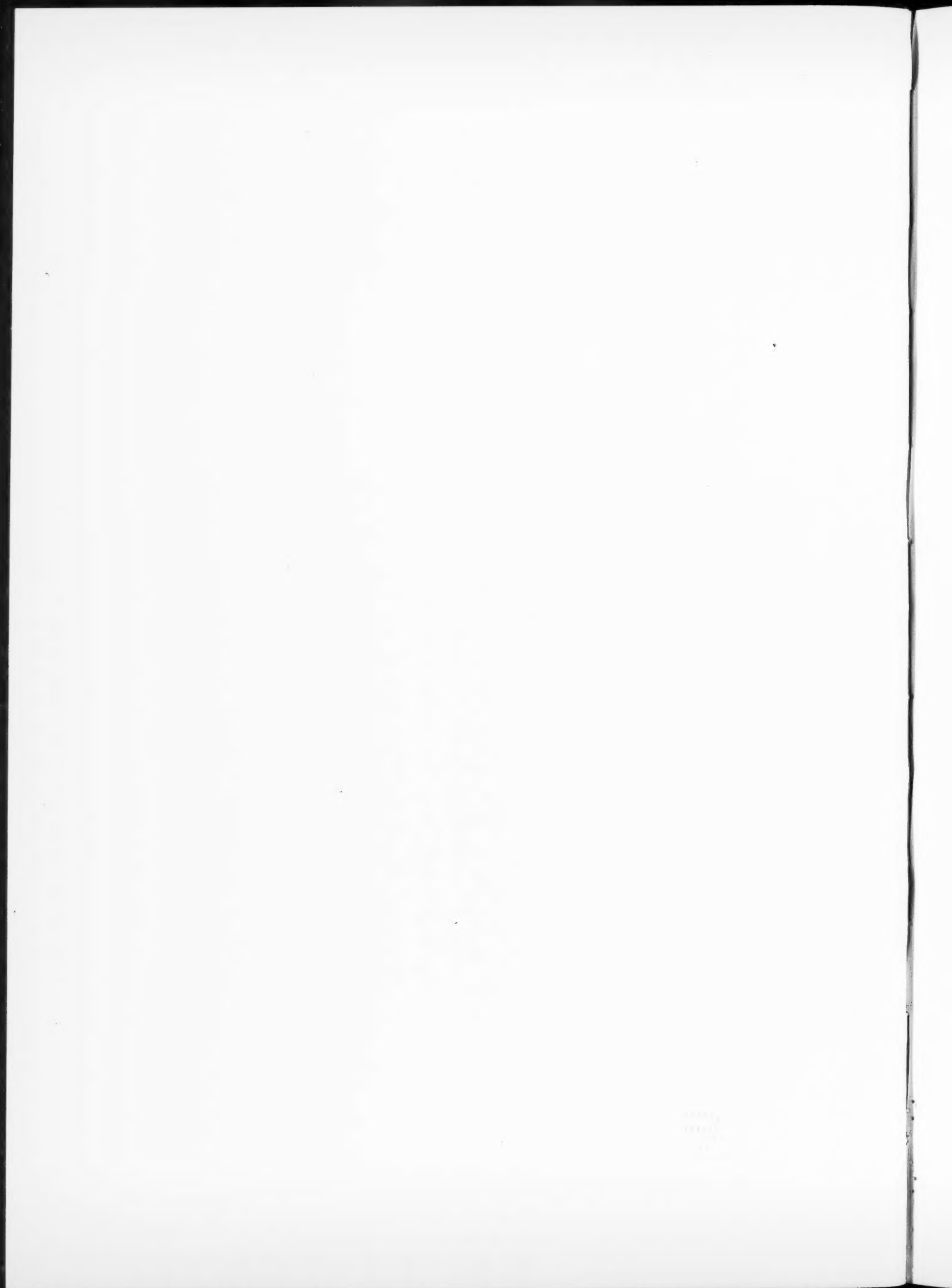


ALBERT P. RYDER: *OPHELIA*  
*Exhibited at the National Academy, New York, 1887*  
*Panel, 16 inches high, 11 3/4 inches wide*



ALBERT P. RYDER: *AN EASTERN SCENE (EARLY)*  
*Canvas, 28 inches high, 24 inches wide*







a tender rendering of this supremely tragic figure as one may not hope to find the equal of elsewhere save in the text of Shakespere's play itself. Its persuasive beauty seems like a reincarnation of all that was best in the finest interpretations of the role which one has witnessed upon the stage.

*Judith Trenchard Swomann*

## LOST OBJECTS OF ART IN AMERICA

### PART ONE

**I**T IS a trite saying that wars and revolutions are fatal to the preservation of objects of art.

Going no further back than the civil war in England in the seventeenth century for an example, not only was the Royal Collection of pictures and objects of art, the most splendid in Europe, sold and broken up, but the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, in their loyalty to Charles I, sacrificed their priceless treasures in old silver for conversion into coin in support of the monarchs. In the French Revolution, countless works of art perished by fire or at the hands of plunderers.

A traveller in the American Colonies before the outbreak of the Revolutionary war in 1775 would have seen in the houses of officials, prosperous merchants, lawyers and planters, elegant furniture, English and Colonial, pictures by American and English artists, and here and there an old master, as well as well-stocked cellars of wine, and a goodly array of silverware of American and English craftsmanship, all testifying to a high standard of living, derived in part from the example set by contemporary England at a period when English furniture and silver plate and English portraiture of the schools of Reynolds and Gainsborough had reached a degree of unsurpassed elegance and refinement combined with comfort.

The present writer is not concerned with a study of the causes of the upheaval which brought about the American War of Independence. This brief article is written solely with a view to revealing the havoc wrought during that war to objects of art in America.

The information has been obtained almost entirely from unpublished documents of the American loyalist refugees in Canada, England, the West Indies and elsewhere, who were composed mostly of the more prosperous classes.

Beginning with furniture, the most detailed account could hardly picture the terrible losses sustained in the eight long years of the war from 1775 to 1783, not only from accidental and deliberate fires, but also from wanton destruction by combatants and others on both sides of the conflict. The mansions and houses of the prosperous were stripped in the most ruthless manner. English furniture of great beauty, dating from the Elizabethan and Stuart periods, as well as Queen Anne and early Georgian furniture, was consigned to destruction. With this furniture went many pieces of the skilled work of American Colonial furniture-makers, such as those of William Savery.

The wealthy merchants of Boston had in some measure thrown off the ultra-puritan habits of previous generations and had begun to enjoy comparative luxury. Richard Clarke, one of the importers of the tea, and father-in-law of John Singleton Copley, the artist, recorded the loss of many household gods, as did many other thriving merchants of that prosperous town.

The elegant furniture of the loyalist, Colonel John Stuart, and of his wife, daughter of a prominent South Carolina family, the Fenwicks, was sold at Charleston in October, 1778, by order of the House of Assembly and realized the large sum of £14,241, doubtless in the local currency. Much of this furniture was subsequently destroyed during the siege of Charleston in the summer of 1780. A list of the Stuart furniture, with the names of the buyers, is preserved in the Public Record Office in London.<sup>1</sup>

The story of the wanton attack by a mob in the Stamp Act riots on the house of Thomas Hutchinson, Governor of Massachusetts, and the destruction of his furniture, pictures and priceless historical manuscripts, has often been told. Some of the revered governor's silver was saved, only to be lost again in the Revolutionary War a few years later. Writing from his place of exile in England in September, 1775, to his son, Thomas, Governor Hutchinson says: "I have wished for the Epergne, knives and forks, tea kettle, and indeed all the useful plate." But these household treasures were never seen again by their owner. An inventory of the exiled governor's house at

<sup>1</sup> A. O. 13-135.

Milton, taken before his departure, reveals such items as two bronzes of Shakespeare and Milton, his own portrait and "Mr. Palmer's portrait", in addition to a considerable quantity of furniture.

The Hessians enjoyed an unenviable reputation as plunderers throughout their career in the war, and their incompetent general, De Heister, was dubbed by the loyalists, "the arch plunderer."

Colonel William Axtell bemoaned the plunder of his well-furnished house in King's County, New York, by the Hessians quartered there. They carried away silver and other treasures, besides executing other damage to his property. The worthy colonel, however, succeeded in taking over with him to England 1,200 ounces of family plate, which had doubtless been stored elsewhere and thus escaped the rapacity of the Hessians.

Another loyalist rued the day when his hospitable home at Trenton, New Jersey, became the headquarters of the Hessians, who destroyed or plundered everything of value belonging to Daniel Coxe, the lawyer of that town.

The mansion of Sir John Colleton at Fair Lawn in South Carolina was filled with furniture, pictures, silverware and porcelain of considerable value, all of which would seem to have been destroyed during the war.

Early in the struggle in New Jersey, Elizabeth Skinner, the wife of a determined loyalist in the person of Brigadier-General Cortlandt Skinner, of the New Jersey Volunteers, was turned out of her home at Perth Amboy, with her twelve children, and all the furniture sold by auction.

Another well-known home of a distinguished and honorable loyalist, Colonel John Harris Cruger, at Bloomingdale, New York, was set on fire and plundered by a party of American soldiers in 1777, before the eyes of his wife, Ann, the daughter of General Oliver De Lancey—a wanton act which aroused the condemnation of the New York Council of Safety.

Nowhere was the war more bitterly contested than in South Carolina, where the combatants on both sides fought with a ferocity unknown in the other provinces. It is, therefore, not surprising that in the charming homes of the prosperous planters and other inhabitants of the town of Charleston the destruction of objects of art was on an unexampled scale. The writer could with ease compile a long catalogue of furniture, either scattered from its original homes or completely destroyed. To the least observant visitor, the prosperity

of Charleston in Colonial times is reflected to this day in the charming houses which have, happily, survived the vicissitudes of those stirring days.

One George Barkesdale, a South Carolina planter who had accumulated a neat fortune, built unto himself a house at Charleston in 1774, oblivious of the coming storm. Skilled carpenters were employed in fitting the house with carved staircases and wainscotting, all of which were used as fuel, while the costly marble fireplaces, probably imported from Europe, were smashed to pieces.

Records have been preserved of the havoc wrought to works of art in the great fire in New York in 1776. The house of Colonel John Roberts, for twenty-nine years sheriff of the city and county of New York, was entirely destroyed, together with its valuable contents. Another elegantly furnished house also suffered destruction by fire, namely, that of Colonel Archibald Hamilton, a retired officer of the British Army who had married a New York lady, Alice Colden. This house was at Flushing, New York.

The house of Colonel Roger Morris, another retired British Army officer who married Mary Philipse, a New York heiress, is known to have contained excellent furniture. This house, called the Jumel Mansion, has been preserved, as a specimen of Colonial architecture, by the commendable efforts of the Daughters of the Revolution.

Colonel Edward Cole, of Rhode Island, commanding officer of a provincial regiment under Wolfe at Quebec, lamented the mutilation of his pictures and furniture during the war. The houses of several prominent loyalists at Newport, Rhode Island, were conspicuous for their well-furnished rooms and hospitality.

Two more examples of the destruction of furniture need only be mentioned in this long catalogue. The first is that of Rev. John Hamilton Rowland, sometime rector of St. Bride's, Norfolk County in Virginia, who petitioned the British Government for the restitution of the value of his silver, furniture, etc., lost, as he describes it, by the "depredations chiefly of American militia, who plundered all those who were esteemed Tories." The second is that of Benjamin Hallowell, comptroller of the customs at Boston, whose fine furniture was sacrificed, as was a good deal of the furniture of the mansion house of his loyalist mother, Rebecca Hallowell, at Boston, the use of which was denied to her and was granted to Samuel or John Adams from 1776 to 1784, when Mr. Adams, as Mrs. Hallowell alleges, left



it in bad repair. Samuel Adams had been given the furniture of absentee loyalists to the value of over £92, as compensation for his services as clerk of the House of Representatives for the year 1774, for which he had not been paid. This furniture was granted to him by a Resolve passed 17 March 1780.<sup>2</sup>

In their flight from New York in 1783, the loyalists carried as much furniture and other precious relics of their lost homes as could be conveyed in the limited space in the crowded transports which took them to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Some of the cargo was wrecked. The wife of Colonel Gabriel Ludlow of New York lost her few pieces of furniture by the foundering of the vessel in the Bay of Fundy.

The losses in old silverware, ecclesiastical and domestic, were incalculable. Church silver of the most sacred and historical associations was not immune from sacrilege. Countless pieces of domestic silver, of American, Dutch and English craftsmanship, hallowed by sentimental family history, shared the same fate and were consigned to the melting pot.

In more than one case, the old sacramental silver was carried away for safety and subsequently lost. Such was the fate of the silver of the Episcopal Church at Fairfield, which will be noticed in greater detail later, as will also the disappearance of the historical vessels of King's Chapel, Boston.

Taking the inventories of loyalists' silver at random, Margaret Draper, widow of Richard Draper, the well-known printer at Boston, and granddaughter of Bartholomew Green, printer of the first American newspaper, the *Boston News Letter*, was obliged to dispose of part of her silver to pay her passage to England.

Thomas Phepoe, a lawyer at Charleston, South Carolina, had a considerable sideboard of silver, which he had sent for safety to the house of one John Ward away in the country, but to his chagrin, it was taken by loyalists in the belief that it was "rebel" property. An exactly similar fate occurred to the silver, furniture and other family treasures of Captain Thomas Moore, sent to the house at New Brunswick, New Jersey, of one Labeteau, an American patriot, in the hope that they would be safe there from the hands of gangs of marauders of the American militia, but here again the fates were against the loyalist owner, all his treasures having been destroyed or plundered by British soldiers in the face of Laboteau's protestations that they

<sup>2</sup> A. O. 12-82, fo. 8.



were the goods and chattels of an officer in the loyalist forces. Such declarations were regarded by the soldiers as merely a ruse to save the property.

Robert Jarvis, a Boston loyalist, suffered great anxiety in England at the prospect of being compelled to dispose of his silver plate, which he had brought away with difficulty. Equally distressed was another prominent Massachusetts loyalist, Daniel Leonard, the author of the famous letters under the *nom de plume* Massachusettensis, who with a heavy heart disposed of £75 worth of jewelry and plate in London for the support of his family, before his appointment as Chief Justice of Bermuda.

Many harrowing tales could be told of other loyalists who in want of the bare necessities of life stuck fast with grim tenacity to their treasures until the prospect of starvation drove them to the pawnshops or to the dealer in precious metals.

A conspicuous figure in the Colonial history of New York was Sir William Johnson, baronet. The silver plate inherited by his son, Sir John Johnson, was buried for safety in the grounds of Johnstown Hall by a faithful slave in the course of the war. When this family was compelled by force of circumstances to leave the old home forever, the silver was removed from its hiding place and carried away in the knapsacks of forty soldiers of Sir John Johnson's own regiment, the King's Royal Regiment of New York, to Montreal in Canada.

Returning once again to South Carolina silver, one Alexander Harvey of Charleston had entrusted a large quantity of silver to the keeping of his faithful friend, John Scott of that city, who in promising to fulfil his trust wrote waggishly in these words: "Your father has been very bountifull to the Churches; there expecting to find favr on his journey. I wish he may; but . . . If I can render you any service you may rely on it I will with pleasure, as I think you have been very Illy used by yr Father." The bequests here mentioned were three of £100 each to three Episcopal churches in South Carolina, and the ill-usage refers to the appropriation by William Harvey—a sympathizer with the American cause in the Revolution—of his son's valuable property on the plea that he had advanced his son, Alexander, money during his student days at the Middle Temple in London. A perusal of the documents has not revealed the ultimate fate of the Harvey silver.

Another valuable collection of South Carolina silver was inherited by Thomas Fenwick from his father and grandfather. It was

sold with some furniture for £2,000 by his executors, the weight of the silver being 1,145 ounces.

A sad case of the compulsory disposal of precious family silver was that of Major Philip Van Cortlandt, of the New Jersey Volunteers. His heavy expenses as an exile in England, with a wife and eleven children, compelled him to sell a considerable portion of it to extricate him from his financial anxieties and embarrassments, a condition very different from the happy time to which he alluded in a letter written 7 December 1775 from his American home to his friend, Isaac Wilkins, then in London.<sup>3</sup>

Uncertain was the fate of some old silver bequeathed by Thomas Campbell of Philadelphia to his son, Peter, afterwards a captain in the New Jersey Volunteers, and to his daughter, Sarah, wife of Isaac Allen, commanding officer of a battalion in that corps.

Among many forced sales of silver was that of Nathaniel Ray Thomas, the leading inhabitant of the ultra-loyal town of Marshfield, Massachusetts, who, to relieve the terrible distress of his wife and family in his exile in Nova Scotia, was not only compelled to sell his silver and furniture but also to appeal to his kinsmen, the Wentworths, to send him any old clothes and stockings.

The losses recorded by Richard Lechmere, of Taunton, Massachusetts, include not only some family relics but also his chariot, detained and used by Dr. Thomas Bulfinch, and his chaise, annexed by Rev. Dr. Cooper, of Boston. One of his most prized relics was "a tree of his father's family in colours."

Joseph Hooper, of Marblehead, Massachusetts, mourns the sacrifice of 350 ounces of silver and his library of 500 volumes, which had escaped the three different attempts of incendiaries to destroy his well-furnished house.

One of the prosperous sons of Salem, Massachusetts, Timothy Lindall by name, bequeathed a considerable quantity of silver to his great-grandson, John Lindall Borland, of Boston, an officer in the British regiment, the 22nd. Foot. Whether this officer succeeded in bringing it to England is doubtful.

Hugh Wallace, one of New York's most opulent merchants, was the owner of some "very remarkable" silver, presented to him by the Earl of Loudoun, commander-in-chief in America in 1756-1758. This was plundered by American soldiers in the course of its journey to New York from Newark, New Jersey, whither it had been sent for safety.

<sup>3</sup> Public Record Office: A. O. 13-54.

Mention has been made earlier of the 1,200 ounces of silver saved by Colonel Axtell.

A silver cup presented by an admiring student to Dr. Samuel Clossy, professor of Anatomy and Natural Philosophy at King's College (now Columbia University), New York, was lost at sea with some silver spoons, in the ship Teresa on the voyage to England.

E. Alfred Jones.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

Editor of Art in America  
Sir:

In studies I have been making of the Morgan ivories in the Metropolitan Museum, I have been confronted by the problem of the date of the pyxis which Mr. Breck publishes in this issue, and find myself unable to agree with his attribution to a Syrian artist of the fifth century. The figure style and ornament certainly do not suggest the Early Christian period, and if Peter is really beardless as Mr. Breck says<sup>1</sup>, this trait alone would place the pyxis in the West, and give it a much later date. As for Syria, the monuments assigned to this center regularly show Peter carrying the cross, not the keys, and when in Early Christian works he does have the keys, they are grasped in the hand and not dangled as in the Morgan pyxis.

The figure style is to me very clearly Romanesque. Nowhere else may one find a pirouette like that executed by the cross-legged apostle (not included in Mr. Breck's illustrations). One can hardly call the style, with Mr. Breck, "coloristic" in the late classic sense; it betrays rather that scratchy irregularity appearing in late ivories of the school assigned by Goldschmidt (*Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der karol. u. sachs. Kaiser*, Berlin, 1914), to Metz. A fairly close parallel to the faces and figures of the pyxis may be found in the Quedlinburg casket (Goldschmidt, pl. LXII).

The same casket has an acanthus border of a type which is merely more developed in the cornice of the Morgan pyxis. The border may be traced back to a late Carolingian school of minor arts located in the abbey of Saint-Denis (Janitschek's "Corbie" school; Goldschmidt's *Liuthard-gruppe*), from which it probably passed into Anglo-Saxon illumination (the rod-and-leaf border), and also into the Metz ivories. The acanthus type is characterized by the sharp overhang of the tips of the leaves, and a tendency to split the leaf into three parts, one representing the central rib, the others the lateral lobes; all three of which have become isolated in the Morgan pyxis.

The Twelve Apostles, without Christ, in full figure, are an anomaly for an Early Christian monument, but by no means so in the ivory caskets of the Metz school (Quedlinburg<sup>2</sup>; Munich<sup>3</sup>). These caskets represent an earlier figure style (displaying even the pirouette), which has become stabilized in the pyxis. The ornament, aside from the acanthus motif mentioned above, represents the usual repertoire of misunderstood motifs from the antique, popular among the later Carolingian and the Ottonian ivory carvers. The following parallels may be found in Goldschmidt: Ionic capitals (pl. XXIII); "gadrooned" dome (with finial, pl. III); acanthus filling of spandrels (pl. XVII); inverted acanthus spray (pl. XLV).

Both ornament and figure style on the Morgan pyxis are more developed than in the Metz ivories catalogued by Goldschmidt, and I should therefore incline to assign the pyxis to a Rhenish atelier of the eleventh century.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Princeton photograph of the pyxis Peter appears to be bearded.

<sup>2</sup> Goldschmidt, pl. XXIV.

<sup>3</sup> Goldschmidt, pl. XXV.

